7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

by the Tuareg of Ayr, the *Kel Geres*, and other Tuareg. The Tuareg obtain salt generally in exchange for millet, but they also bring with them dried meat, and meat from animals newly slaughtered; and although this meat is largely rotten when it arrives at Bilma it is easily sold to the oases dwellers who are yearning for meat. The oases dwellers have little to subsist upon but dates of which they have a surplus. This is purchased by the Tuareg, who get two loads of dates for one load of millet. The Bilma trade is less important nowadays than it was at the beginning of the century. In 1922 the Bilma caravans comprised about 7000 camels (Buchanan 1926, p. 83), while in 1908, when the trade was already decreasing, caravans numbered about 20,000 camels (Abadie 1927, p. 292). Caravans still go to Bilma to fetch salt and dates, but the salt trade is not so profitable to-day when Bilma salt can be bought fairly cheaply at Agadez, as the trucks bringing provisions from Agadez to the French administration and to the merchants of Bilma, take salt back with them when they return. The Ayr Tuareg do not organize their trading expeditions within family groups or sections as in Ahaggar. A Tuareg who does not want himself to go to Bilma may let a kinsman or a friend trade for him with his camels. The payment for this is a large loaf of salt which constitute one sixth or one seventh of a camel load.

The Ayr Tuareg do not generally obtain salt from the pits of Tegidda-n-tésemt though this place is not very far from the Massif to the west. They say that the Tegidda salt is not as good as Bilma's. The salt of Tegidda-n-tésemt is purchased mainly by the *Iwllemmeden Kel Dennek* when visiting the regions around Ingal after the rains. Some of the *Kel Ayr* who live in the extreme north (the *Kel Tédalé*, and others) occasionally go to Amadror in the north to fetch salt which is taken down to the Sudanese towns and villages. In years when drought prevails in Ahaggar these Tuareg take their surplus of livestock to the market at Tamanraset, for in dry years the provision of meat, butter, and cheese consumed in Ahaggar come mainly from Ayr and adjacent regions. When I stayed in Ahaggar in 1954–55 a great many Tuareg of the *Kel Tédalé* came to Tamanraset to sell camels, donkeys, sheep, goats, and zebus, and also brought with them large quantities of cow's butter and cheese. The route followed from Northern Ayr to Ahaggar runs via I-n-azawa and I-n-abeggi which are the only wells between the two mountain massifs. Water is very scarce and so is pasture, which is mainly limited to a scattered vegetation of annual plants; over very large areas there is no vegetation at all. It is easy to drive camels and donkeys through these regions, while more difficult for sheep, goats, and cattle. The zebus easily get cut hooves from walking on stony ground, while sheep and goats suffer much from thirst. In spite of this, all kinds of livestock can be driven through the barren desert from Ayr to Ahaggar, even as late as the month of March which is extremely hot in the barren desert country. The Tuareg frequently lose animals which die from thirst and hunger during the journey, but the trade is nevertheless extremely profitable as prices of livestock are high in Ahaggar in dry years, while prices of European goods such as tea, sugar, cotton, metal vessels, and the like are extremenly low compared with the prices asked for these goods in Ayr.

The Ayr Tuareg, though owning more livestock than the Tuareg of Ahaggar, have a certain demand of agricultural food products. These products are mainly grown outside of the Massif, for the farmers of Ayr grow little millet, very few dates, and part of the wheat grown in Ayr is exported to the oases of Ganet and Rat in the north. Though these vegetable products can be purchased at Agadez, it is profitable to fetch them where they are cheap, namely in the Sudan (millet) and in Bilma (dates). And